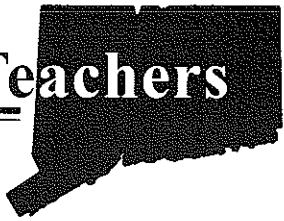


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Bill No. 266

Testimony of Karen Ivers, Former LPN Instructor State Vocational
Federation of Teachers
Labor and Public Employees Committee
March 1, 2010

RE: Testimony regarding the transfer of Licensed Practical Nursing Programs to Community College System

Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding the transfer of the Licensed Practical Nursing Program to the Community Colleges. My name is Karen Ivers and I was the former LPN Department Head at Bullard Havens THS in Bridgeport, Connecticut. As you consider this bill, please be aware of the following important points;

The transfer of the Licensed Practical Nursing Program to the Community College System is not a simple move. The curriculum, which has been perfected over years of hard work, would need to be totally modified to reflect the college credits for the LPN courses. To date, giving recognition via college credits for the LPN Program has been minimal at best.

The Licensed Practical Nursing Program would need to become a tract in nursing by itself, and also be incorporated into the Associate Degree Registered Nurse Program should a student decide to continue to advance in the nursing field. No such model currently exists in Connecticut.

Some Community Colleges nationally list Licensed Practical Nursing among its courses of study, but also indicate that this program takes place off site in the Technical School System. Other Community Colleges have long embraced Adult Technical Education as part of the community college level of education, and have well-developed curricula to integrate college credits into Adult Technical programs of study. For this to occur

successfully in Connecticut, a committee would need to be developed to study the models of program integration in other schools in the country, decide on the best model for the Connecticut School System, and then develop curricula for all adult programs, incorporating the collegiate requirements and credits, a daunting and timely undertaking.

The Technical School System provides a more intimate and less stressful environment for the adult learner, especially those returning to school after a long absence. The Licensed Practical Nursing students remain with the same faculty throughout the entire program, allowing for individualized instruction, which is generally not available in the college system. The Technical School System calendar follows the school schedule of the children of the students, making the technical schools a better fit for the adult parent who currently enrolls in the program.

The State Licensed Practical Nursing Program recently incorporated college credit for some of the courses offered in the curriculum. This came about through the diligent efforts of one of the Department Heads who was extremely knowledgeable about the Community College System. In addition, the program also added English and Math as the two prerequisites to entering the program. These two prerequisites and a Psychology course are offered online through Charter Oak Community College. This has been very successful for many of our students who prefer the online method of study for these select courses. Our goal is to continue to add college credits to our program so students can be more appropriately placed in Associate Degree or Bachelor Degree programs should they decide to do so.

The Licensed Practical Nursing Program offers a comprehensive course of study. Once a student is accepted, they remain in the program until the end. There is no fragmentation of courses being available, courses being filled, or progression being deferred because of course availability as happens in the community colleges. Our students are able to devote the time to complete our program because they can count on the length of the program being constant.

The other issues such as the faculty affected, the cost involved, availability of space, etc., add to the complexity of moving this program. The space, equipment, and supplies have already been purchased through the Technical High School System and currently sit unused. The inclusion of the Licensed Practical Nursing Program in the Technical School System has been successful for nearly 70 years. Our hope is that it remains successful in this school system.

Respectfully submitted by,

Karen Ivers